

THE DOORWAY OF PORPHYRY, TURIN.



THE DOORWAY OF PORPHYRY, TURIN.

In no city of Europe are there more magnificent doorways than in Turin: indeed, the whole architectural wealth of the place seems to have been treasured up for this one feature: not only are the art and labour exquisite, but the material is often of the richest and most costly description. An instance of the latter is the doorway shown in the present sketch.

Nor are the doorways only remarkable, but the doors themselves are equally worthy of attention, the carving on many of them being of equally good design and execution, and the *tout ensemble* is generally rendered complete by the guards of Bronze which protect them from injury when open. G. T. ROBINSON.

SURVEYS AND VALUATIONS.

The survey and valuation of Aberdare parish, within Merthyr Tydfil Union, has been determined at a meeting of the guardians. The parish of Aberdare comprises 16,858 acres of land; 12 collieries; 3 iron works, having 10 blast furnaces; 4 miles of canal, and 10 miles of railway. The Board determined on accepting Mr. T. D. Paine, of London, as their surveyor.

Wolverhampton.—The survey and valuation of the two sections of this town have been undertaken by Mr. Bampling, architect, Liverpool, and Mr. Henry, civil engineer, of Manchester.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE MANCHESTER FREE LIBRARY.

We are specially gratified to be able to record the safe accomplishment of a free library in such a city as Manchester. It is to be hoped not only that its thousands of working classes will largely and continually avail themselves of its advantages, but that the example will be rapidly contagious throughout the country. Some alterations, it appears, are required in the Act, which is unintentionally restricted in its operation as regards the supply and the repair of books, &c. and these should be seen to in the forthcoming session of Parliament; meantime, there is nothing in the Act to hinder, or to render it desirable to postpone, the foundation or establishment of new libraries, but quite the contrary: it is an Act available to all towns for the acquisition of a great good at a small cost.

The opening of the Manchester Free Library took place on Thursday last.

The building, situated in Byron-street, was originally erected in 1840, as a "Hall of Science," by Mr. Owen, and, having fallen into disuse, was purchased by the Library Committee, and remodelled for their purposes from plans by Mr. J. W. Pickard. Messrs. Taylor and Williams were the contractors, Mr. G. Jackson executed the decorations, and Mr. Chadfield the painting. The entire length of the building is 109 feet, and its width 54 feet. The lending library is 83 feet long by

51 feet wide, and 16 feet high, having a double row of five metal columns. The reference library has the same length and breadth, but is 27 feet high. A lavatory is provided beneath the entrance-hall. The building is warmed by hot water in 4-inch pipes; and certain arrangements have been made for the removal of vitiated air.*

The large room in which the reference library is stored was the place chosen for the ceremonial of inauguration, which was graced by the presence of various literary and other celebrities, among whom were Sir E. L. Bulwer Lytton, Mr. W. M. Thackeray, Mr. Charles Dickens, Lord Shaftesbury, Sir J. Stephen, Mr.

* The Manchester Examiner gives the following particulars:—"The arrangements for the escape of the impure air comprise two methods—gas ventilating chimneys, and special channels, or air ways, formed in the cornices. These communicate with down shafts concealed in one of the end walls, and they have all one common terminus at the base of a large ventilating chimney at one end of the building. The heated and vitiated air passes into these channels, which run completely round the rooms, by means of narrow slots in the plaster, concealed from view by mouldings in the cornice. All the impure air, whether arising from breathing or from the combustion of the gas, is brought by the down-shafts to the base of the large chimney, into which the boiler also sends its smoke and heated air. This chimney is divided, for several feet upwards, with brick partitions, so as to prevent any drawback of smoke or bad air, as well as to direct the vitiated air poured from many channels into one common upward course. No wind-guard, cowl, or like appendage, is found necessary, as the peculiar form of the ventilating chimney or shaft, which (reversing the usual construction) gradually widens from the base to its summit, contributes very powerfully to quicken the draught, and make it effective in all weathers and seasons. This arrangement of gradually widening diameters is adopted throughout the ventilating system."